

Application No. 10/682,541
Docket No. 63268.US

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached formal drawings (Figs. 1-18) replace the prior drawing figures.

Attachment: Replacement Figs. 1-18

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-5, 7-11, 14-22, and 25-26 are pending. Claims 1, 6, 12, 13, 23, 24 and 27 are cancelled without prejudice.

Formal drawings are provided herewith in response to the Examiner's objections.¹

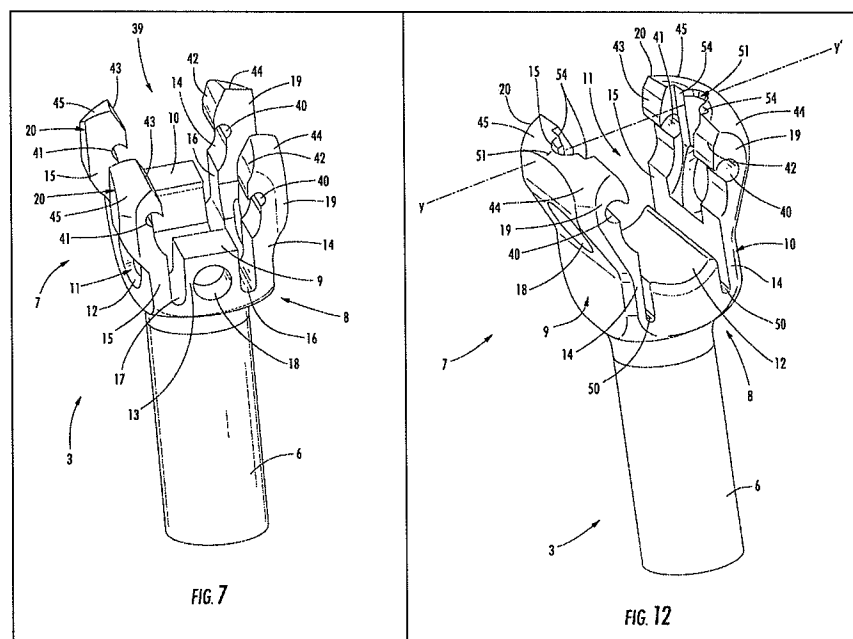
Presently, the claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,740,086 to Richelsoph.

All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 2.

Independent claim 2 requires, among other things (emphasis added), a head having two vertical walls delimiting a central U shaped opening whose bottom has a part cylindrical profile, each vertical wall being separated from the bottom of the central opening by a vertical slot giving a certain elasticity to each vertical wall.

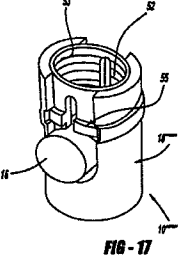
For the purpose of example, this language corresponds to the vertical walls 14 and 15, opening 39, and the vertical slots 16 and 17 of the embodiment of Figs. 6-10, and the vertical walls 9 and 10, central opening 11, and vertical slots 50 of the embodiment of Figs. 12-18:



Accordingly, the vertical walls are each separated from the bottom of the central U-shaped opening by the vertical slots.

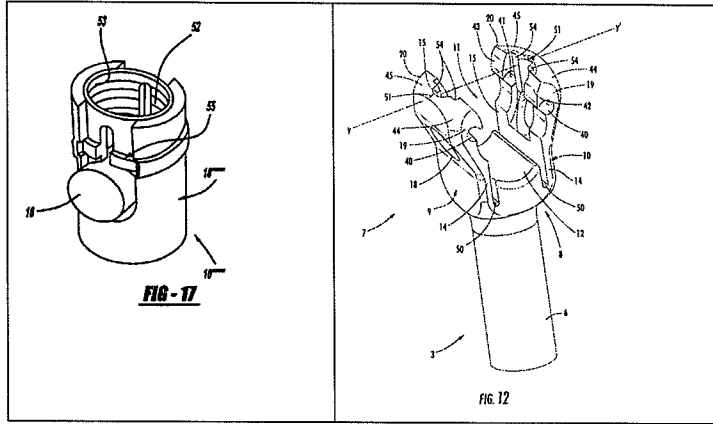
The Examiner asserts that the Richelsoph device (Fig. 17) provides this structure, stating that Richelsoph has "a head comprising two truncated vertical walls, delimiting a central opening of U shape whose bottom has a part cylindrical profile, each vertical is constituted by a central surface bordered laterally and on each side by elastic blades, e.g. 33', separated respectively from said central surface by vertical slots (see column 15, lines 19-24). . ." (Office Action at page 3).

It is respectfully submitted that the Richelsoph structure does not provide the claimed structure:

	<p>Col. 15, lines 19-24 (Portion relied upon by the Examiner):</p> <p>The size, shape, and dimensions of the extending tab mechanism 55 vary according to a desired size of the overall structure of the fixing mechanism 18'''''. Likewise, the indentation 33' on the inner surface wall 20'''''' or the aperture 35' extending therethrough the inner surface wall 20'''''' varies accordingly. (FIG. 17)</p>
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As will be appreciated, there is no aperture 35' shown in Fig. 17, and it is assumed for the purpose of this response that the indentation 33' referred to is the lateral indent that the tab mechanism 55 is shown inserted into. There is a reference to an aperture 35 in connection with Fig. 16, a different embodiment. However, whether provided as a lateral indent or an aperture through the sidewall of the vertical wall sized and configured to engage the tab mechanism 55, the Richelsoph structure of Fig. 17 fails to provide any structure corresponding to the claim requirements of vertical walls separated from the bottom of the central U-shaped opening by vertical slots. As shown in the Richelsoph device, the indent is part of the walls and the walls continue to the bottom of the opening, and are not separated from the bottom in the manner of the claimed invention.

¹ Both prior office actions noted that the drawings were ACCEPTED.



In addition, claim 2 further requires that the vertical slots give elasticity to the vertical walls. The lateral indent shown would appear to serve to stiffen the walls. In any event, there is no suggestion that the indent would provide any elasticity, and Richelsoph is clear that an important feature is the use of a semi-flexible material (Col. 7, line 29; Col. 14, lines 66-67).

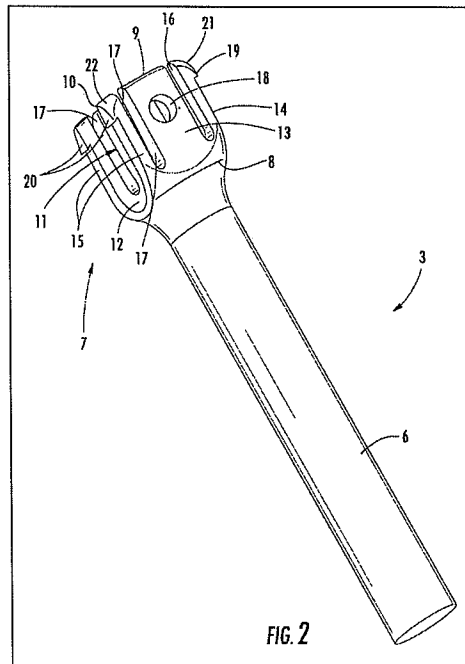
In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 and its dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 20.

With regard to the remaining independent claim, claim 20, this claim requires, among other things, a head having two vertical walls delimiting a central opening of U shape whose bottom has a part cylindrical profile, each vertical wall being constituted by a central surface bordered laterally and on each side by elastic blades separated respectively from said central surface by vertical slots.

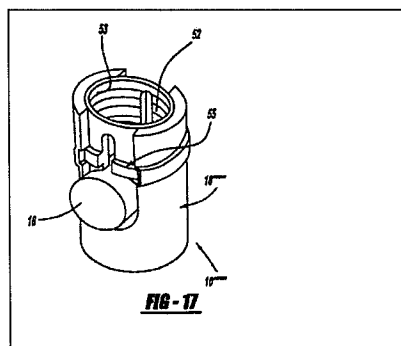
For the purpose of example, this corresponds to the vertical walls 9 and 10, central surface 13, and the vertical slots 16 and 17 of the embodiment of Figs. 1-5:

Application No. 10/682,541
Docket No. 63268.US



Application No. 10/682,541
Docket No. 63268.US

The Richelsoph device has nothing even remotely corresponding to “two vertical walls, each vertical wall being constituted by a central surface bordered laterally and on each side by elastic blades separated respectively from said central surface by vertical slots.” As will be observed, the claimed structure requires at least 3 components forming each wall (central surface and a flexible blade on each side), for a total of 6 components for two walls. Richelsoph has no such structure:




Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 20 and its dependent claims is therefore requested.

Reconsideration and issuance of a notice of allowance is requested. In the event this response is not timely filed, Applicants hereby petition for the appropriate extension of time and request that the fee for the extension along with any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper be charged to our **Deposit Account No. 12-2355**.

Respectfully submitted,

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